The details of the sea turtles reported found dead in Orissa during last three years are as under :

Year	Number of turtles found dead
2000-2001	5,483
2001-2002	12,977
2002-2003	8,464

(c) The steps taken to effectively protect sea turtles include :

1. Olive Ridley Turtle is listed in Schedule I of the Wild Life (Protection) Act, 1972 and thus is being provided highest degree of protection under law.
2. Territorial water and Gahirmatha coast where largest congregation of turtles takes place for egg laying has been declared as a sanctuary.
3. Fishing by trawlers and other mechanized fishing vessels has been banned upto 5 km stretch from the shore line as per the provisions of the Orissa Marine Fishing Regulation Act, 1982.
4. The seaward side upto a distance of 20 kms from Jatadhar mouth to Devi, and, mouth of Chilika to Rusikulya mouth, has been declared as "No fishing zone".
5. Assistance of Coast Guards has been sought to prevent illegal entry of mechanized fishing vessels in areas banned for fishing.
6. Additional staff and local villagers are deployed to strengthen the protection measures during the nesting season.

Mercury pollution

4380. SHRI SURESH KALMADI :

SHRI VIJAY J. DARDA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware of the report released by the UNEP mercury pollution causing various deformities like chromosomal anomalies and other major deformities among the population;

(b) if so, the steps taken by Government to restrict the mercury pollution in the country; and

(c) the action taken to promote global cooperation on the subject?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The industrial discharge/emission limits for toxic metals including mercury have been prescribed by the Government. Action points have been evolved for complete recycling of mercury bearing effluent, installation of continuous on-line mercury analyzer, treatment of cell room ventilation gas, de-mercurization of caustic soda, reduction of mercury in hydrogen gas, capping of existing completed disposal sites, brine sludge treatment and water leachable mercury content in brine mud, reduction of mercury consumption and switching over of the mercury cell plants to membrane cell technology in a time bound manner.

Clearance for Hariharjore Project

4381. SHRI RAMACHANDRA KHUNTIA :

SHRI B. J. PANDA :

Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state :

(a) whether Government are aware that Orissa is a drought-prone State and agriculture is the main stay of the economy;

(b) whether Hariharjore Project of the State is pending clearance with Government;

(c) whether Government are aware that on completion, it will provide a sigh of relief to the drought hit farmers of the State; and

(d) if so, the time by when this would be cleared?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (SHRI DILIP SINGH JUDEV) : (a) Yes Sir.

(b) and (c) Hariharjore irrigation project has already been accorded environmental clearance on 12-09-1995 as a part the Orissa Water Resources Consolidation Project. An area of 9450 hectares in Orissa State will be brought under irrigation.

(d) Does not arise.